

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 16267 130236Z

ACTION ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00

SP-02 SOE-02 AF-10 ARA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 EA-10

PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NASA-01 NEA-10 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 DOE-15 CEQ-01 OES-09 SS-15 ICA-11

INRE-00 /159 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4249

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USNATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 16267

USSALTTWO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, MBFR, SOPN, UR, US

SUBJECT: PONOMAREV DISCUSSES U.S., MBFR AT WORLD

PEACE COUNCIL

SUMMARY: PRAVDA OF JULY 12 CARRIES A SUMMARY OF
SPEECH OF CANDIDATE POLITBURO MEMBER BORIS PONOMAREV
TO A SESSION OF THE WORLD PEACE COUNCIL ON JULY 11
IN MOSCOW (ASSUME WASHINGTON HAS FBIS TEXT). SPEECH
IS IN KEEPING WITH CURRENT SOVIET LINE OF IMPUTING
AGGRESSIVE MOTIVES TO THE U.S. AND NATO AND OF SOVIET
DETERMINATION TO PURSUE DISARMAMENT AND DETENTE.
PERHAPS BECAUSE OF NATURE OF THE FORUM, PONOMAREV
SOUNDED EVEN MORE STRIDENT AND SELF-RIGHTEOUS THAN
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 16267 130236Z

HAS MOST OF RECENT SOVIET COMMENTARY. END SUMMARY.

1. THE TWO HIGHLIGHTS OF PONOMAREV'S SPEECH DEALT
WITH THE U.S. AND WITH MBFR (SALT WAS NOT DISCUSSED
AT ALL BY PONOMAREV). ON THE U.S., PONOMAREV ATTACKED
U.S. POLICIES AT SEVERAL POINTS AND NEAR THE END OF THE
SPEECH HE LAUNCHED A NEW THOUGHT BY STATING THAT

"ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THREATS" HAVE BEEN MADE AGAINST THE USSR. AS AN EXAMPLE OF THIS, PONOMAREV CITES WHAT HE IDENTIFIES AS A VERY RECENT SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT IN WHICH THE LATTER IS QUOTED AS STATING THAT THE U.S. IS STRONG AND CAN SUSTAIN EVEN A STRATEGIC NUCLEAR ATTACK. THIS, PONOMAREV SAYS, SUGGESTS THE PERMISSIBILITY OF NUCLEAR WAR, WHICH, HE THEN SAYS, IS CONTRARY TO THE SPIRIT OF SOVIET-U.S. AGREEMENTS ON BASIC PRINCIPLES AND ON THE PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR.

2. ON MBFR, PONOMAREV PLACES GREAT EMPHASIS ON THE RECENT EASTERN PROPOSALS, WHICH ARE DESCRIBED AS MEETING "HALF-WAY SOME OF THE WISHES OF THE WESTERN PARTNERS." PONOMAREV THEN SAYS THAT THE PROPOSALS ARE NOT "BASED ON THE DEMAND -- ALL OR NOTHING" AND SAYS THAT THEY ARE "NOT ULTIMATUMS, BUT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY FOR DISCUSSION AND MUTUAL CORRECTION OF POSITIONS."

3. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SPEECH INCLUDE:

-- AN ATTACK ON THE NEUTRON WEAPON IN WHICH, AS HE DID IN HIS SPEECH IN HELSINKI AT THE END OF APRIL, PONOMAREV SUGGESTS THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION ON THE WEAPON WAS IN PART FORCED BY THE SOVIET-CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 16267 130236Z

INSPIRED PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN ON THE SUBJECT;

-- ATTEMPTING TO REFUTE THE "LIE" OF THE SOVIET THREAT, PONOMAREV SAID THAT PARITY EXISTS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE USSR AND THAT MOSCOW DOES NOT SEEK SUPERIORITY; AND

-- THE RHETORICAL QUESTION WHY THE U.S. NEEDS NEW WEAPONS FOLLOWED BY THE QUESTION WHY DOES THE U.S. NOT ACCEPT SOVIET DISARMAMENT PROPOSALS.

4. COMMENT: PONOMAREV'S REASONING FROM THE ASSERTION THAT THREATS HAVE BEEN MADE AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE U.S. HAS VIOLATED THE SPIRIT OF TWO BASIC BILATERAL AGREEMENTS HAS AN OMINOUS RING, ALTHOUGH PONOMAREV PROBABLY INTENDED NOTHING MORE THAN A CONVOLUTED PROPAGANDA POINT AGAINST THE U.S. THE EMPHASIS ON MBFR WHILE SALT IS IGNORED IS BECOMING RITUALISTIC IN SOVIET DISCOURSE, ALTHOUGH PONOMAREV GOES FURTHER IN SUGGESTING SOVIET FLEXIBILITY IN THE VIENNA TALKS THAN HAVE OTHER SOVIET PUBLIC STATEMENTS. FINALLY,

PONOMAREV APPEARS TO REFLECT FRUSTRATION WITH THE
PERSISTENCE OF THE "LIE" OF THE SOVIET THREAT,
DESPITE CONTINUED DENIALS BY MOSCOW. MATLOCK

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